

ACES Quarterly



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This quarter we spotlight the ACES-Housing Management (HM), ACES-Fire Department (FD), Paperless Contracting, Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Hardware Bugs, ACES-Project Management (PM), AF Portal, ACES-Readiness (PR), ACES-Operations (Ops), Information Technology, ACES Certificate of Networkiness (CoN), and the ASG meeting on 2 Feb 01.

ACES-Housing Management

Our ACES-HM process owner, Mr. Dave Annis, traveled to AFIT in January to demonstrate the capability of the new interactive on-line system training (OLST).

Mr. Annis was accompanied by four representatives from our CONUS-based MAJCOMs, Mr. JB Nolen (Andrews AFB), and an OLST contractor representative. The functionals were presented with different user scenarios to demonstrate not only the effectiveness of the OLST, but also its relation with the rest of the total training package, namely the Demonstration Data Base and HM user manual. After evaluating the documentation, they concluded this package would enable them to operate in the ACES-HM module environment. In a step toward ACES-HM dependency, four 1-hour training sessions were offered at the Professional Housing Management Association meeting the week of 22 Jan 01. Immediately following this was additional training by the MAJCOMs for approximately 30 days. Worldwide conversion will be implemented starting 2 Apr 01.

The Hurlburt AFB migration and Scott AFB conversion to ACES-HM (version 1.3) went well. AMC spent approximately five hours with Scott's housing personnel learning the training package, successfully preparing them for their IWIMs to ACES conversion. Training for AMC, ACC, AFMC, and AETC base level was conducted 19-30 Mar 01 at Maxwell AFB, Gunter Annex AL.

Mr. Dave Annis and Ms. Annette Walker (SSG) traveled to Ramstein Germany for the ACES conversion of Rhine-Main AB and to prepare USAFE personnel for their conversion during the second quarter of CY 01. They also met with Furnishings Management representatives to discuss USAFE and PACAF issues for the next scheduled change to that portion of the software.

ACES-Fire Department

The ACES-FD module rollout continues at a rapid pace. On 27 Feb 01, the Standard Systems Group (SSG) completed work on upgrading the ACES-FD software. This version includes a "seconds" time stamp that allows alarm time received and vehicle dispatch/arrival times to be tracked in seconds, not just minutes. The software was delivered to the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) at Wright-Patterson AFB OH. The software has been loaded on the AFIT server for training material development and student training. SSG, AFIT, and the Integrated Process Team have identified some anomalies with the software and the training database. These issues are being worked now.

The training will be conducted in a cascade format. Initially in mid-July, 24 firefighters will receive

facilitator training at AFIT. Once this training is completed, the teleteach portion of the training is scheduled to begin on 30 Jul 01 and [conclude NLT 30 Sep 01](#). Teleteach training will be conducted at 20 regional locations to include two each in USAFE and PACAF. Each class will have 20 students, and an instructor who is stationed at a computer terminal at AFIT conducts the training. The students at the teleteach sites are also in front of computer terminals and see the same screen the instructor sees and hears his voice as he proceeds with the lesson. Each teleteach site has two facilitators on location to provide individual instruction and assist with any problems that may occur. Firefighters who receive teleteach instruction will return to their departments where they will install the software, load required data, and instruct local firefighters who require training.

Max View to Replace Source View as Electronic Advertising Software for Construction Solicitations

Source View, the software that converts Auto/Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD) or Microstation CADD construction drawing files into a format that can be placed into a single electronic solicitation package, will be upgraded to a 32-bit version called Max View. This software makes files easier to download, view, and plot.

During the transition, there is a potential compatibility issue with FedBizOpps, the Unix-based site the AF utilizes to post all solicitations. Max View reader can read both Source View and Max View documents. However, Source View will not open a Max View file. The problem involves use of lower-case

versus upper-case. The old Source view authoring tool assumed file names were not case sensitive, and therefore stored them as upper-case in the index file regardless of their actual case on the file system. For example, file "a.cal" is stored as "A.CAL." The result is that the new Max View reader cannot find files generated by the Source View authoring tool if they are in lower case on the FBO. There are three solutions: (1) Rename the names of the uploaded (.cal) files on the file system in all upper-case, (2) Recreate the files using the new Max view authoring tool and re-upload, or (3) Simply continue to use the Source View reader. Once sites cross over to all Max View-generated drawings, this will not be an issue. The Max View reader also automatically works with an Internet Explorer browser and can work with a Netscape browser if you manually set the Mime type and extensions for Max View in both the browser and WebServer.

Each base-level contracting office will be mailed a CD-ROM server license of Max View and will be responsible for management of the site licenses distributed to that base. As with Source View, Civil Engineer organizations may request the Contracting office to convert any number of their licenses to a stand-alone license that may be loaned to Architect-Engineering firms under contract to the Air Force. A Max View guide can be downloaded from the web, <http://www.safaq.hq.af.mil/contracting/electronics/EPS/>. The POC for contracting and technical issues is Maj Greg Snyder, SAF/AQCI, gregory.snyder@pentagon.af.mil, DSN 425-7048. The POC for Civil Engineer policy issues is Mr. Dale Olsen, HQ USAF/ILECM, dale.olson@pentagon.af.mil, DSN 329-0194.

This effort is part of the Air Force commitment to the Defense Reform Initiative and the DEPSECDEF's paperless contracting goal. The Air Force is seeing substantial savings in printing and mailing costs, as well as reduced cycle time with this extremely cost-effective way of conducting business.

DISA Experiences Network Problems

The DISA experienced problems with two of their servers in early Mar. Their DISA1 server kernel parameters were corrupted on 1 Mar causing the eventual lock up of the system on 4 Mar. They quickly restored DISA1 on 5 Mar. SSG, DISA, and Hewlett-Packard (HP) have tried to determine the cause, but have not come up with an answer yet. HP will continue to investigate.

A kernel is the computer code that is the heart of the UNIX operating system. It runs constantly and monitors the system, keeping all the multi-tasked jobs running. The parameters that were corrupted are what it uses to set upper and lower limits on what it allows to process on the system (e.g., number of simultaneous jobs). Affected bases: Avon Park, Barksdale, Cannon, Davis-Monthan, Dyess, Ellsworth, Lajes, Langley, Moody, Offutt, Seymour Johnson, Shaw, and Whiteman.

The DISA5 server went down on 5 Mar. The initial problem with DISA5 was a disk failure. Fortunately, it was still under warranty and HP and SSG are working diligently to bring the server back on-line. The subsequent equipment replacement, reinstallation of the operating system, necessary configuration of the server, IWIMS, ACES, and all

application software, for example the SanSoft's Viewport, was required. The software reload was 95% complete as of 12 Mar when other problems arose. This seemingly straightforward task has turned out to be far more difficult than anticipated, and SSG, DISA, HP Software Support, and Sansoft jointly have been unable to resolve to date. As of 18 Mar, the IWIMS databases were moved to other servers so SSG could rebuild the DISA5 system. Once the rebuild and testing are complete, the databases will be moved back to DISA5.

On 19 Mar, after working around the clock, they restored the ACES database to other servers and were continuing to work ACES interface and database administration issues for Real Property. As of 23 Mar, all corrective actions to the data were accomplished. Because of the problems with data recovery tapes, one week of ACES data had to be reinput by the users. DISA5 was validated on 5 Apr. System Administrators were notified their systems were completely operational on 9 Apr. Affected bases: Bolling, Buckley, Cheyenne Mountain, Eglin, Falcon, Hurlburt, Malmstrom, Onizuka, Patrick, Peterson, and Vandenberg.

ACES-Project Management

ACES PM version 1.1.1 was loaded on the SSG servers 12 Mar 01. Users will notice improved performance and faster response times. Enhancements include: (1) The capability for all MAJCOM program managers to add projects to ACES PM using a MAJCOM-specific installation code. This code will be the same as your command (i.e., PACAF = PACAF in "Base Name"). If a record is added using

that installation, the MAJCOM will retain update rights. The MAJCOM program managers may need to assign base-level roles depending on what they attempt to update on the project. However, if the MAJCOM creates a project using one of their individual bases as the location, the “rights” for update to that project are still retained by the base. For example, if HQ AFMC creates a project with ZHTV (Wright-Patterson) as the installation, once that project is inserted, it belongs to the base. (2) Changes were also made to every form to increase performance when navigating the forms. (3) The “menu” bar was changed to include an item called “Air Staff.” All of the functions performed by the Air Staff program managers are now listed under that menu item (i.e., DI Process, AF Form 378 Funding). (4) The error in the AF Form 378 in the withdrawal process for funding was corrected. (5) If you attempt to make an update and receive an error message, instead of just seeing an “OK” button, you will now get a form that has three areas. The first will restate the original error message with some additional information to assist SSG in any required troubleshooting. The second is an explanation of why you received the error (i.e., violated a business practice). Thirdly, you will receive a suggested course of action to correct the error.

Training is progressing as scheduled with only three MAJCOMs remaining. Reserves (9 Apr), ACC (15 May), and ANG (May-Sep 01).

The next major change for ACES PM will be the conversion to a web application. This will negate the

need to load client software on your PC. Implementation is scheduled for 26 Jul 01.

One Air Force – One Network, the AF Portal

If you haven’t heard, we are working diligently with SSG to move ACES to the web environment and link it to the AF Portal. We have already moved PM, HM, FMO, and RP to a web-test environment. The first module to be fielded on the Portal will be ACES-PM. Others will follow as they are tested and reviewed for security requirements. SSG and AFCESA are working the process to get names for the Portal prioritized and user accounts established through the HQ USAF/IL program office. For those of you who work with these modules, you need to make sure you have an account established on the Portal. If you need an account, please let us know and we will work to ensure you will be able to continue working ACES in the web environment. New modules will be built in the web environment and fielded through the AF Portal. For more information about the Portal, check out <https://web2.ssg.gunter.af.mil/IL/>.

ACES-Readiness

SSG hosted a functional review of the Readiness Module at Gunter Annex, 13-15 Mar 01. Participants for the review included squadron readiness managers, RED HORSE training managers, and Guard and Reserve unit readiness managers. The functional managers and the SSG software developers identified many areas for improvement and several were corrected on the spot. SSG will review the remaining recommendations to determine the time required for implementation.

The Readiness Automation IPT met concurrently at Gunter Annex AL, 15-16 Mar 01. The IPT approved a recommendation by the review team that functionality be added to the module to allow for dual tracking of both MTW and AEF UTC taskings. The IPT reviewed the latest release of LOGMOD and its plans for web access. The IPT also identified two training methods for further evaluation. Based on current projections and the time required to develop the training program, training and implementation will not begin before CY2002.

ACES-Operations

The Operations IPT held a VTC on 14 Mar 01 to discuss the roadmap for the next 10 months. A core team consisting of a Lt Col with Operations Flight CC experience, a TSgt with operations management and work control experience, a real property specialist, financial manager, and logistics specialist will be formed as soon as possible to work issues full time.

In the interim, the current IPT chartered on 1 Jul 00 and the HQ AFCESA/CEOM staff will move forward with documenting business rules currently used. This will serve as a baseline to measure all proposed changes. Once we have defined a baseline, we can proceed with validating proposed core work control, financial management, and logistics requirements and business rules changes. The next step will be to brief the CCB and ASG on our process improvement recommendations. Our goal is to complete this process by 15 Aug 01.

The Air Force Civil Engineer on Information Technology

The former SECAF and the CSAF have made a commitment to fundamentally change the way the Air Force uses information technology to increase its combat power and mission effectiveness. Every MAJCOM commander and all of the Headquarters Air Force principals are committed to the initiative. On 6 Jul 00 at an Information Technology Summit, the SECAF directed the AF Chief Information Officer (CIO) and his deputy CIO to lead the charge. The overall campaign is called "One Air Force, One Network."

You've probably already seen some of the initial results such as the Sep CSAF Commanders' NOTAM 00-5, Information Technology (IT), the November 2000 intercom magazine, and the fielding of the Air Force Portal. Additionally, teams of experts are putting the finishing touches on a series of initiatives including: (1) An overall Enterprise Concept of Operations or CONOPS describing the grand strategy for tying our IT infrastructure, business applications, and existing systems together under one integrated framework. (2) "My.AF," the official AF Portal, providing a heads-up, display-like desktop viewer and tool for integrating web applications, network access, and PC-based information for more than 30,000 users today and very soon the entire Air Force. (3) The Air Force White Pages for locating and communicating with every active, guard, and reserve military member, civilian, and full-time contractor serving the AF. White Pages link e-mail addresses and our personnel database and ultimately will be the authoritative source for how to identify and reach people, regardless

of who needs to, what system they're using, or for what official purpose.

I have tasked our ASG to review its Strategic Plan in light of the results of the IT Summit, and to report back their findings before the middle of Jun. It is imperative that we continue to keep our automation tools in lock-step with the Joint Technical Architecture-AF and Certificate of Networthiness compliant. IT can help us locate and filter the essential information for better, more informed decisions. Self-service applications (think about the convenience of using the FA intranet from your desktop) can eliminate wasted travel and waiting time, help customers faster, and free up customer service representatives for other important job-related work. IT can make our resources go farther, bring us closer together with AEF mission partners around the world, and enable us to execute our mission with pinpoint accuracy. ACES and GeoBase are just two initiatives that will help revolutionize installation IT management in both the in-garrison as well as deployed environment. A third exciting initiative underway is our work with the CADD/GIS Technology Center to create truly open geospatial data standards that allow for the transparent transfer of geospatial information across proprietary systems.

Partnering with the rest of the Air Force to harness the combat power of our networks will take everyone's cooperation. Under the Air Force Chief Information Officer, the Air Force Global Combat Support System (GCSS-AF) Requirements Integration Directorate (or GRID) stands ready to help us migrate our systems/applications/capabilities into the GCSS-AF Integration

Framework and open access to our information resources via My.AF. Creativity and innovation will be more important than ever in our own application, but in order to share information across the Air Force, we must all use one standard framework. Most importantly, we must make wise decisions about the IT capabilities and equipment we buy to get the best return for the AF. The CSAF and SECAF have directed the migration of all AF combat support applications to the Portal by the end of the summer and have asked all functionals to participate in server consolidation actions at base level. To this end, AFCESA and SSG are working to present an initial web-enabled ACES-PM tool via the AF Portal. The objective is to give the server job to Comm where the expertise should reside and free up some of your people to do their "real" jobs.

ACES – Certificate of Networthiness (CoN)

The initial draft of the ACES Command, Control, Communication, Computer, and Intelligence Support Plan (C4ISP) was sent to Air Force Communications Agency (AFCA) for review on 22 Jan 01. The C4ISP is the document that the Air Force Chief Information Officer (CIO) uses to determine if ACES meets all AF requirements and standards for operating on the AF network. The result is a CoN. Network Risk Assessment testing was started by SSG/CETL in early Mar on the ACES-PM, HM, FMO, and RP modules. Their report will be forwarded to AFCA, where a final evaluation will be made to determine if a CoN can be issued without any further modification. We currently forecast getting our CoN for all of ACES from HQ USAF/CIO in Jun 01. Once

the CoN is received, we must seek MAJCOM Certificates to Operate (CTOs).

ACES-Automation Steering Group

The ASG met 2 Feb 01 at Robins AFB GA. In addition to integration process team updates, briefings on GeoBase, Next Generation Installation, AFIT training, and C4ISP compliance were presented. The minutes can be viewed at our HQ AFCESA homepage, <http://www.afcesa.af.mil>.

Coming Events

24 Apr 01: CCB at Wright-Patterson AFB OH

19 Jul 01: ASG at Scott AFB IL

IT Wisdom

“It’s hard to believe we ever did this another way”

Sylvia Bartel – Director of Pharmacy, Dana-Farber